



THE PRATTLER

The Heyford Village Newspaper

December 2020/January 2021

Issue No. 439

St Peter and St Paul Parish Church &
The Friends of Bliss present

NETHER HEYFORD

ADVENT WINDOWS

24 WINDOWS TO FIND IN DECEMBER!

*From the 1st to the 24th December,
you can find a new window lit up each
day throughout the village, in our
village advent window calendar*

Keep an eye out for the numbered windows!

*Maps will be available to download from the Friends of Bliss
Events Facebook group.*

*We are lucky to already have all the volunteers for the
numbered windows, but we would be delighted with
additional Christmas-themed window displays to enhance
the Christmas joy in the village.*

Get well soon Guy

As some of you may know, Guy Ravine has had a nasty accident at home which has resulted in him suffering serious burns and a broken leg. He is now being treated at Stoke Mandeville Hospital.

We wish him a speedy recovery and hope he is home soon.

Joe Garratt

It is with great sadness that we learn of the passing of one of our oldest residents of Nether Heyford

Joe Garratt passed away on the 18th November aged 97

He will be sadly missed by wife Joan, daughters Linda and Eunice and all his family and friends

The Prattler

The Prattler is run by an active voluntary committee comprising of Sue Boutle, Christine Watts, Vicki Hamblin, Jez Wilson, Nick Essex, Richard Musson and Mary Rice. If you would like to submit articles or have any suggestions for future issues, please get in touch.

The Newspaper is supported by donations from the Parish Council, the Parish Church, the Baptist Church, Heyford W.I., Heyford Garden Club, Heyford Singers, the Bowls Club, the Village Hall and Heyford Picturedrome as well as the advertisers.

Thanks are also due to the volunteers who distribute it every month.



PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Unfortunately it was not possible to have the Parish Council meeting in November due to Covid restrictions and Guy's accident. Hopefully there will be one held in December.

Councillor list with responsibilities and preferred means of contact.	
C. Kiloh, 3 Church Lane, Nether Heyford. Tel 07779 900860	Chairman, Planning, Finance.
L. Dilkes, 17 Furnace Lane, Nether Heyford, NN7 3JS thedilkesfamily@outlook.com 07967 753216	Village Hall Rep, Youth Club, Vice Chair, Finance
L. Eales, 3 Church Lane, Nether Heyford Tel. 01327 341707 lyndaeales@aol.com	Allotments, Playing Field.
P. Green, 8, South View, Nether Heyford Tel 01327 349072 Mobile. 07763 244065	Joint Burial Board
N. Haynes, 30 Weedon Rd, Nether Heyford Tel 01327 340167	Tree Warden, Planning, Joint Burial Board
D. Musson davemusson073@gmail.com	Footpaths
A.Williams 26 Church St, Nether Heyford, NN7 3LH anthony.k.williams@talk21.com	Chair of Planning and Finance.

Clerk to the Parish Council: Guy Ravine, c/o Old Dairy Farm, Upper Stowe, Weedon. Northampton. NN7 4SH.

Tel:07935 931787. E-mail: netherheyfordparishcouncil@gmail.com



Parish Church of St. Peter and St. Paul

Services for December 2020

Sunday 6 th	09:30 am	Lay Led Service at Heyford Church
	10:00 am	Service of Holy Communion on Facebook
	11:00 am	Service of Holy Communion Service at Flore Church
	06:00 pm	Service of Holy Communion Service at Upper Stowe
Sunday 13 th	10:00 am	Service of Holy Communion on Facebook
	11:00 am	Service of Holy Communion at Heyford Church
	03:00 pm	Afternoon service at Upper Stowe
	06:00 pm	Evening service at Flore Church
Wednesday 16 th	06:00 pm	<i>Carols on the Doorstep with BBC Radio Northampton **</i>
Saturday 19 th	03:00 pm	Drive-in Carol Service on the Brodie Lodge Playing Field in Flore
Sunday 20 th	10:00 am	Service of Holy Communion on Facebook
	11:00 am	Holy Communion at Upper Stowe
	06:00pm	Evening Service at Heyford
Thursday 24 th	03:00 pm	Christmas Holy Communion Service at Upper Stowe
Xmas Eve	06:00 pm	Christmas Holy Communion Service at Flore
	08:30 pm	Christmas Holy Communion Service at Upper Stowe
Friday 25 th	10:00 am	Christmas Holy Communion Service at Heyford
Xmas Day	11:00 am	Family Service at Upper Stowe
	11:00 am	Christmas Morning Service at the Chapel in Flore
	11:15 am	Christmas Holy Communion Service at Brockhall
Sunday 27 th	10:00 am	Service of Holy Communion on Facebook – 'Blue Christmas'

Midweek Service: Morning Prayer at 9:00AM every Friday via Zoom (not 25th December). Please contact the Rector for an invitation – all welcome.

As we re-open our church buildings for public worship, we follow all Church and Government Guidelines regarding capacities, social distancing, face coverings, no singing, the administration of Holy Communion etc. to ensure we keep people as safe as possible.

The Benefice Facebook Page can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/HS9FB>.

*** Carol Sheets for 'Carols on the Doorstep are available from bbc.co.uk/radionorthampton and click on the 'make a difference' section.*

Prayer During December we shall be praying for people living in Winston Close, Roberts Field and Ridgeway Furlong in Heyford, Nether Lane and Thornton Close in Flore, The Green in Church Stowe and The Old Rectory, Rose Cottage and Western Cottage in Brockhall.

A vertical poster for BBC Radio Northampton. At the top, there is a row of stylized white houses and evergreen trees against a dark background with white snowflakes. Below this, a dark rectangular box contains the text 'BBC RADIO' in white, with 'Northampton' in a larger, bold white font underneath. The main text of the poster is 'Join us for Carols on the Doorstep', with 'Carols on the Doorstep' in a large, bold, dark font. Below this, the date and time 'Wednesday 16th December 6 - 7pm' are written in a dark font. At the very bottom, in a smaller dark font, are the frequencies '104.2 FM | 103.6 FM | Digital' and the website 'bbc.co.uk/radionorthampton'.

BBC RADIO
Northampton

Join us for
**Carols
on the
Doorstep**

Wednesday 16th December
6 - 7pm

104.2 FM | 103.6 FM | Digital | bbc.co.uk/radionorthampton

Services for January 2021

Sunday 3 rd	09:30am	Lay-led service at Heyford Church
	10:00am	Service of Morning Prayer on Facebook
	11:00am	Service of Morning Prayer at Flore Church
Sunday 10 th	10:00am	Service of Holy Communion on Facebook
	11:00am	Service of Holy Communion at Heyford
	11:00am	Lay-led service at Upper Stowe
	06:00pm	Service of Holy Communion at Flore Church
Sunday 17 th	10:00am	Service of Holy Communion on Facebook
	11:00am	Partnership Service of Flore Chapel
	11:00am	Service of Holy Communion at Church Stowe
	06:00pm	Evening Service at Heyford
Sunday 24 th	10:00am	Service of Holy Communion on Facebook
	11:00am	Service of Holy Communion at Flore Church
	06:00pm	Evening Service at Upper Stowe
Sunday 31 st	10:00am	Service of Holy Communion on Facebook
	11:00am	Service of Holy Communion at Heyford
	06:00pm	Evening Service at Flore

Midweek Service: Morning Prayer at 9:00AM every Friday via Zoom (not 1st January). Please contact the Rector for an invitation – all welcome.

As we re-open our church buildings for public worship, we follow all Church and Government Guidelines regarding capacities, social distancing, face coverings, no singing, the administration of Holy Communion etc. to ensure we keep people as safe as possible.

The Benefice Facebook Page can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/HS9FB>.

Prayer During January for people living in Church Lane and Weedon Rd in Heyford, Spring Lane and Russell Rise in Flore, Francis Row in Upper Stowe and the Stables and Coach House in Brockhall.

Dear Friends,

One of my Christmas highlights for many years has been reading the prologue to St John's Gospel at carol services and services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth"* (John 1:1,14).

Inevitably, our Christmas celebrations will be different this year. We're assuming that our church buildings will be open again, but restrictions around capacity, social distancing, facemask's, singing and so on will still be in place. We won't be able to host big carol services this year, but we are planning a 'drive-in carol service' on Saturday 19th December at 3:00PM on the Brodie Lodge Playing Fields in Flore. That service, as with many of the services we've planned, are subject to change, depending on how we emerge from the lockdown, in just under two weeks (as I write). Please watch church and village Facebook pages and village websites for updates as we make our way through December.

Of course, I'm sure it's not just the church planning for a 'different' Christmas. At this stage, we're all unsure of what the rules will be in five week's time. I guess we'll have to be flexible as things develop in the coming weeks. That might mean we don't spend quite so much in creating the 'perfect' Christmas, but we're happy instead to muddle through a bit. After all, the first Christmas was far from perfect; a teenage mum-to-be, political interference (the census), a long, difficult journey, Mary and Joseph far from home, no family support, nowhere to stay, their baby born in a stable. As Bishop John put it recently, if only Joseph had booked ahead, the angels found some higher status witnesses than shepherds, and the wise men had followed sat nav rather than a star, and brought some more practical gifts – like nappies!!

Making do with what they had was what the first Christmas was all about, and maybe that's what our Christmas will be like this year. Mary and Joseph had to cope with the unexpected, and so will we, as the pandemic continues to shape our lives on so many different levels. But the good news is the 'the Word became flesh and lived among us'. In Jesus, God took on our human flesh and lived as one of us. Jesus came, not on Zoom, but in the flesh, and he asks us to follow him, not on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, but in person. Christmas reminds us that God is not distant, he longs to share our lives; the tough, challenging bits as well as the light, joyful ones; the trials and troubles as well as the triumphs.

So I pray that whatever things look like come December 25th, you will know God's comfort and joy this Christmas, and in the year ahead.

With every prayer and blessing,

Stephen (tel 344436)



Nether Heyford Baptist Church

(In anticipation of the lockdown measures being lifted on 2nd December).

Morning services have now re-started and comply with the current government and Baptist guidelines. We are meeting in the Baptist rooms, holding shorter services and would be pleased to welcome you (with some restriction on numbers).

Services for December:

December 6 th	10.30am	Morning worship led by Clive Leakey
December 13 th	10.30am	Christmas Gift Service led by Martin Buckby
December 20 th	10.30am	Lessons and carols led by Les Britten
December 25 th	10.30 am	Christmas Day Service led by Les Britten

Services for January:

January 3 rd	10.30am	Morning worship led by Clive Leakey
January 10 th	10.30am	Morning worship led by Les Britten
January 17 th	10.30am	Morning worship led by Wendy Manley
January 24 th	10.30 am	Morning worship led by Les Britten
January 31 st	10:30 am	Communion service led by Martin Buckby

All welcome

Heyford Scout Group Christmas Card Collection

The group intend is to offer a Christmas Card service to the village this year, assuming that the current national coronavirus lockdown is lifted on December 2nd. However if at time of publication the lockdown has been extended we regret we will not be able to go ahead.

If we can proceed the collection will work differently this year.

From 2nd December postboxes will be placed in the One Stop Shop, Heyford Meats, the Foresters and the Olde Sun. There will also be a post box in Bliss School. Last posting date will be 16th December.

If you have cards you would like delivered please post in one of these, in a sealed bag with your payment of 20p per card. All cards will be sorted and then quarantined for at least 48 hours before they are delivered by adults from the group on the weekend 19th/20th December, we will take appropriate hygiene precautions during delivery.

We will keep you updated via the Prattler website and village/Scout Group facebook pages, if the post boxes appear in their locations that means we are going ahead !

Heyford Scout Group wish all of the village a Happy Christmas.

Tom's Blinds

Tom Brown
Blind Fitter with over 10 years experience
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Located in Nether Heyford
Call for free no obligation quotes
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01327 226415, 07925 338435 Pclaprepairs@gmail.com

Mike Read Gas Services

Mike Read
mikesgas.mgr@googlemail.com
MOB: 07960037067
Gas Engineer
no: 506717

Dear Diary,

December 1959

This year has been special to me because I went on a school trip to Germany for 10 days. I didn't think I'd be able to go as it cost £20 but mum, bless her, got a job in the kitchens on the M1 building site where the offices are, so that she could pay £1 a week. I saved the £6 pocket money we were allowed to take by running errands for Mrs. Davis at The Olde Sun over to Sid Capel's butchers shop. There were 12 Marks to the Pound so we had to work out roughly how much things cost. We had to take extra clothes including spare shoes, 2 handkerchiefs and a full change of underwear. I bought a 12 film for my Brownie camera. We stayed in Boppard on The Rhine, visiting several interesting places including Cologne Cathedral where I have a photo of me and Jane at the top with a view of The Rhine. I'll never forget this wonderful experience.

Christmas is nearly here and the girls in my class each made a Christmas cake at school, a picture of which was in the Chronicle & Echo. This year I have some money to buy my own presents so I'm meeting my friend Janet in town on Saturday to shop. We'll start at Woolworths I think. Mum and Dad are planning an evening at the pub because they are open until 11 o'clock, half hour more than other nights so I shall write out my Christmas cards and wrap my presents when I get home. I hope we've got plenty of brown paper and string.

On Sunday we are having a Christmas concert in church and the choir have been rehearsing. It's mostly Christmas carols, just one short anthem, and everybody joins in. I'm looking forward to this. The crib is in place where everybody can see it and the ladies will fill huge pots with Christmas roses and holly. Mum and Dad are even coming for a change.

I warned the chickens that they don't have long left as dad is hoping to pluck and draw one for Christmas lunch. I dare say I shall help him. He'll wring its neck, which I don't watch, then he gets me to hold it while he pulls out its innards (they don't half stink), then there'll be feathers everywhere when he plucks it. He'll pick the Brussels 'yuk', carrots and spuds from the garden and the Christmas pudding is made – we all had a stir for luck. Hope I get the silver thrupenny bit again this year, it's usually in my piece, I must just be lucky. If my cousin comes I bet he'll get one as well, though he's only 4 so he could swallow it.

We have a huge table in our living room so we can seat us all round it for dinner. We have some home-made Crackers to pull, a tin of salmon for tea plus the Christmas cake I made, and plenty of coal in the shed for the fires, one in the living room and one in the front room, which is a rarity. After dinner I bet we have a sing song. Mum will play the piano and we join in the songs we all know. Her latest favourites are Three Coins in a Fountain by Frank Sinatra and Oh My Pappa by Eddie Fisher, then she'll revert back to the good old War songs that the oldies know, and Christmas Carols of course. I wish she'd learn to play a bit of Elvis Presley.

After this the grown-ups will fall asleep, especially if they've had a beer or a glass of sherry and I might help my cousin do a bit of colouring because he will no doubt get a new colouring book and pencils for Christmas, that's to keep him quiet for a while I expect. I might read my School Friend with Dilly Dream which my auntie usually buys me and my cousin will probably get a book as well. Neither of us know what else we'll get because we don't get to choose, we get whatever our parents can afford, but we drop hints. All we need now is a bit of snow.

Polly



On behalf of the Royal British Legion, Nether Heyford Women's Section, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for the generous donations given through the Justgiving site set up by Jez Wilson to help with the Poppy Appeal.

Thank you Jez for your participation in setting this up and for your earlier note in The Prattler. Thank you to all for the generous donations given, through the site and through donations given personally to members of the RBL. Your donations have exceeded the expectation of the original £80 to purchase the wreaths. I can confirm that I have paid the sum for the wreaths and once all monies are collected, I will let The Prattler know and put the totals in the next edition.

Once again, thank you all. This means so much to keep the RBL helping our veterans.

Kind regards

Caroline Elliott

Treasurer



Who is this and What was it all About??

Sally Smith MBE (formerly Sally Foulkes)

Students from the USA visit Nether Heyford May 1979

Recently there was a photo posted on the Heyford Facebook page, with a question "Who is this?" Several people had answered before I saw it and there is a story behind the photo.

The picture was of me taken by the Chronicle and Echo, then a much read daily local paper. There was an article on the front page in the edition printed on Tuesday May 15th 1979, 42 years ago. Margaret Thatcher had just become Prime Minister, the shop that is now Restore was the Post Office run by Mrs Blaney and the Eales family was running the "VG" store just visible in the picture, which was much smaller and their living room has now become part of the shop. There was a bus shelter since removed because of vandalism. It was a very hot early summer, hence the sun dress!! Unfortunately my copy of the paper despite being in a plastic box has been attacked by a mouse, but gives the details of why I was looking quizzical.

"I was then Parish Clerk, and a letter arrived at the Post Office addressed to the "City of Nether Heyford Tourist Information Office." Mrs Blaney gave it to me. It was a request for details of hotels or other accommodation in Nether Heyford from a Professor at Concordia College Minnesota USA. I wrote back to say we were a very small village without any hotels. They wrote back saying they really wanted to stay in Nether Heyford and after discussion with the Parish Council and other people in the village it was decided we could offer 'B and B' in local homes.

The students from Concordia were going to be visiting the UK and Europe on a cycling tour using backways and byeways. Their tour would start from London and take them via Bath and Stratford upon Avon en route to Cambridge, Denmark and Paris. We told them about Sulgrave Manor which would be on their route from Banbury to here so that was added to their itinerary and they arrived here in mid May, assembling on the village green to meet their hosts. We organised a tour of the Church with the Rector Alan Horsley, before everyone went off for a wash and change and evening meal with their host families. Later we all met in the games room at the Foresters Arms where local historian Ron Greenall of Leicester University gave them a lecture about Heyford and Northamptonshire, with slides, followed by games of skittles and darts, shove ha'penny and plenty of local beer. After a good "Full English" the next day the group set off for Cambridge and the rest of their European Tour. Concordia students came back to Nether Heyford several more times as they had enjoyed their visit so much.

And why did they want to come here... our village is half way between Stratford upon Avon and Cambridge, it was as simple as that!

Americans put Northants village on the tourist map

The sights
of England

**Stratford,
London,
Bath . . .
and
Nether
Heyford**

By Julian
Baskcomb

AMERICAN student cyclists, keen to see all Britain's great sights, are visiting London, Salisbury, Bath, Stratford-upon-Avon and NETHER HEYFORD.



WHY HERE? Nether Heyford Parish Council Clerk Mrs. Sally Foulkes on the village green.

Food bank

Don't go hungry – if you are in need of help, please contact Towcester Food Bank 07724 832043 (24 hours). www.towcester.foodbank.org.uk

Leave a message and they will phone you back. They can issue vouchers for food as well as a delivery or collection service.

Alternatively if you wish to help, please leave donations for the food banks in the box outside the door of 15 Middle Street where they are delivered to the banks twice a week.

Thank you.



In Nether Heyford

And so, The Nether Heyford Women's Institute's 90th birthday has come... and gone! Sadly, we won't be enjoying the party we were planning to have in December but we did receive a certificate from WI House commemorating the event. We would have been presented with this at the County Federation AGM but covid wreaked havoc yet again and it was delivered by the postman instead! It is good to have and we shall accept it with pride and thoughts of all those WI ladies that did so much for the village during those 90 years.

Along with everyone else, we must hope that the exciting news of vaccines will mean that life will return to some kind of normality in the not too distant future and all our village groups will be able to resume. Just think how wonderful it will be to be able to throw away those facemask's and recognise everyone again! I also wonder how many extra miles have been walked by people going home to fetch them so they can get into the shop?

As I write this I have no idea what plans will have been made for us for the Festive Season but I do know that the members of the WI wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous and HEALTHY New Year!

Mary Rice
Heyford Lodge, Church Lane
01327 340101



New services launched by Age UK Northamptonshire

Shopping Service



- Call us with your list
- Pay over the phone
- Shopping delivered to your door next day (call before 2pm)
- Delivery charge £5

Meal Delivery Service



- Call us today with your order
- Freshly prepared two course meal
- Delivered the next day to your door
- Meal/delivery charge £6 per person
- Pay over the phone

The Venton Centre
York Road

Northampton, NN1 5QG

www.ageuk.org.uk/northamptonshire

Improving Later Life in Northamptonshire

 **01604 604500**

Registered charity No. 1059995

Allotment News

Welcome

A warm welcome is extended to all new allotment holders (and those who are planning to join us in 2021). It has been heartening to see so many new allotmenters in recent weeks. Plots that had once been derelict or have become vacant will now be put to good use and enable us to continue making the site on Watery Lane something of which the village can be proud.

Allotment Holders

If you are considering growing your own fruit and veg, act quickly by contacting Lynda Eales on 01327 341707. We have only a few vacant plots left, although two of those are the small “starter plots” that were created two years ago to give people the opportunity for people try out allotmenting free of charge for one year. If tenants like what they have been doing, they can transfer to a proper allotment (and pay rent) the following year. The cost of renting is not expensive and the vast majority of plots range from between £12 and £30 per year. Now that has got to be good value!

Rent Night

It was originally hoped to have our annual rent night in January. With the current uncertainty surrounding Coronavirus restrictions we are not in a position to confirm whether that will take place or whether we will be able to use the village youth club building. Please bear with us. Regardless of what happens, the rent due will be posted to each allotment holder in due course.

Sue's CORNER

A beautiful commemorative bench has been set in place in our community orchard to remember the life and achievements of Sue Corner. Without her tireless efforts much of what we see on the allotments today would not have come to fruition.

Mike Langrish

*All the flowers of all the tomorrows
Are in the seeds of today and yesterday*

(An Indian Proverb)



Heyford Garden Club

www.heyfordgardenclub.com

I can tentatively announce that we hope to have a talk via Zoom from Philip Aubrey on "Ponds and Water Features" on the 7th December. This is the third attempt at getting a talk from Philip, the previous occasions being sabotaged by travel problems and the first lockdown. We hope that this will be third time lucky! Full details will be announced in due course.

Autumn Pleasures

This autumn so far has been rather soggy but the lack of cold weather has meant that many plants are still performing in November; we have a red dahlia full of flower, our raspberries are producing an occasional handful of fruit and the *Eleagnus x ebbingei* and the winter flowering viburnums are filling the garden with scent. I sowed some calendula seeds in August with a view to having them flowering in the spring but they grew so well that they began flowering at the end of September and are still in full swing.

Last year our winter jasmine produced no flowers at all despite a healthy amount of growth, and I suspected our horde of sparrows of having eaten the buds. However this year we are getting a show of flower so perhaps they were innocent. On the negative side I am seeing a lot of greenfly about the garden as the weather is mild but there are fewer predators around.

The joys of being untidy

On my allotment I have a bucket which I use to steep comfrey leaves to make plant feed. When I came to remove the rotted leaves I discovered several maggots with long tails living there. These are "rat tailed maggots", the larvae of one of the larger species of hoverfly. The "tails" of these grubs act as snorkels as they live in stagnant water where there is no oxygen. As these flies are useful pollinators I replaced the decaying vegetation and will have to wait until spring for my fertiliser. On another occasion I was splitting a log, part of which was decaying only to discover a very large grub in a hole in the wood. This looks to me very much like the larva of the stag beetle, a creature which is becoming rare because so little wood is allowed just to rot away naturally. Hopefully this particular grub will be able to eat its way further into the log which I left for it.

Things to do in December and January

Just take time to think about the past year and its successes and failures and use that to make plans for the coming year.

Don't forget to take advantage of any good weather to look at the garden and see how the shoots and buds will be already presaging the coming spring.

Mark Newstead

Nether Heyford Village Hall



Available for Club Meetings
Parties, Weddings, Business
Meetings etc. Modern facilities,
Disabled access friendly

Bookings: nhvhbookings@gmail.com

Website: www.netherheyfordvillagehall.com

Phone: 01327-342167

NETHER HEYFORD

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CHARITY No. 1029571

Pre-School

Ages 2-5 years

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Highly qualified and experienced staff

Excellent links with Bliss School

Fantastic village location

Use of numerous outdoor facilities
including:

- Bliss Schools' Outdoor Classroom
- Forest School activities
- 'Rising 5' sessions for those starting school in September
- Childcare vouchers accepted



Before & After School Club

Wrap around are available for
children aged up to 11 years old

Breakfast Club incl. breakfast open from 7.45am

After School Club open until 6pm

'Walking Bus' to and from Bliss School
provided if required

Transition sessions available for Bliss
School reception class.

**Drop in and see us at
The Church Rooms, Church Lane,
Nether Heyford or call on
07984 055 828**

info@netherheyfordpreschool.co.uk
www.netherheyfordpreschool.co.uk



*You raise me up so I can stand on mountains.
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas.
Strong when I am on your shoulders.
You raise me up to more than I can be.*

“You Raise Me Up” by B Graham and R Lovland

A tribute to Alan Watson

It was with much sadness that we heard, on 27th October, that Alan Watson had died, after a long but determined battle with illness. We have lost someone who was very much part of this village, a contributor to many of its activities and organisations.

Alan, Pam and their two young sons moved to Nether Heyford in 1975 when Alan was appointed headteacher at Bliss Charity School, living initially in the school house before moving to Wakefield Way. Thus began a long and close relationship with Nether Heyford. He taught hundreds of children in his time there, gave them a wonderful start in life and a set of guidelines to hold them in good stead for the rest of their lives. Alan was first and foremost a teacher in the classroom, where he was happiest! At his retirement 28 years later Alan said that he had loved every moment, never had a bad day. I was privileged to work at Bliss with Alan for many years and have many happy memories of that time, becoming not only a work colleague but a close friend as well. Whilst not an overly keen coach traveller Alan did respond enthusiastically to the school's Queen's Golden Jubilee adventure in 2002 ... to take the **whole school** to London for the day! Many will recall the fleet of coaches outside the school that summer morning, everyone went on the London Eye, KS1 had a river trip, KS2 toured the Globe theatre, then a sightseeing tour of the capital before a happy and weary return to base!

To many, Alan was a quiet, private, family man, but there was a very theatrical side to him as well! A regular performer in the annual village panto's, he usually played the villain, giving his pupils the chance to boo their headteacher! When the Heyford Morris side was formed, Alan joined, generously offering the school hall as a regular practice venue. He relished the role of telling audiences in market squares and on village greens about the various dances performed. When Pam's dance group, Queens Oak Ladies Morris, were short of a dancer Alan (aka Alana) stepped into the breach, although not necessarily wearing a dress!

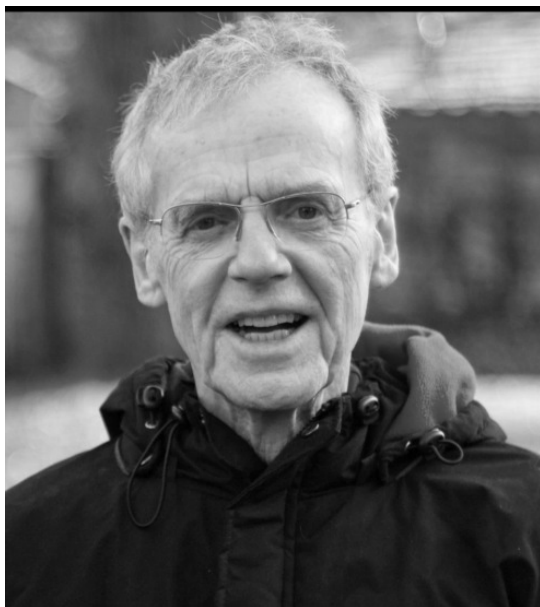
Alan was a very fit and active person, he enjoyed walking in the countryside with Heyford Amblers and Bugbrooke Strollers, and at home he tended his garden and allotment, also belonging to Heyford Garden Club. He loved travel, France and Italy were favourite destinations and he and Pam spent many happy holidays there. Alan's mind was ever active and he retained a great thirst for learning, becoming a keen member of CLASP and Whitehall archaeology group, taking part in 'digs', field walking and processing the finds. When Roberts Field was built Alan supervised the

organisation and placing of a time capsule with the children at Bliss, connecting the present to the future.

But it is with music that I shall end this tribute. Alan loved music and especially singing. As a child he sang in his local church choir, eventually achieving the status of head choirboy at St Michael's Church in Bournemouth. He developed a fine baritone voice which could often be heard soaring above others at school concerts, church services and other music events. Soon after it was formed Alan joined Heyford Singers and was a loyal and enthusiastic member. He thoroughly enjoyed the concerts and rehearsals, often performing solos or participating in readings and comic sketches. Even when cruel illness made him less mobile and he could not communicate as freely as he would have wished, he never gave up and continued to come to rehearsals and sing! The song quoted above was one of Alan's favourites, he knew it by heart and sang it with heartfelt joy. It was played at his funeral, and would have been sung by Alan and the choir of Heyford Singers at the postponed concert in May. When we return to rehearsals and our next concert, we shall sing this song for Alan, sadness in our voices but in loving memory of someone who loved to sing, to share the joy of music, and feel "strong".

Alan will be sorely missed by so many people, not least Pam, his family and his grandchildren. We, the community in Nether Heyford, are the poorer for his passing but richer for having known him. I do hope that in due course we, as a village, are able to mark Alan's huge contribution to our school and community.

Jill Langrish



View from the Wildlife Patch

As we move into the last month of 2020 our thoughts are of the approaching Christmas and the New Year of 2021.

At “The Patch” we are planning for 2021 already. We agreed from the start that our goal is to provide a haven for what is now termed “Bio diversity” and to make it accessible to all residents of Nether Heyford.

This is being achieved by providing a number of “Mini Habitats” joining to make one larger habitat. Earlier in November our management team of four agreed this is still the best approach to achieve our goal.

At the narrow end of the patch there are some young Elms which have died after falling victim to Elm Bark Beetle. When these become likely to fall we will cut these into logs to leave in strategic places as seats and to provide cover for insects other invertebrates. There is a mown patch at that end with a bench. That area will be planted with a few trees to form a very small spinney. The bench will be moved to the pond edge where visitors can sit to enjoy the rich pond life. It is known that ponds act as a sort of “Insect chimney” attracting many species of insect. These in turn encourage Bats and insect feeding birds among others.

We have all enjoyed the rich Flora and accompanying Fauna provided by the “cornfield Annuals” wild flower mix.. We agreed to maintain an “annual patch” by removing the vegetation from the current patch. We will then cultivate the soil and plant new seeds each year. These will provide a rich and varied diet for flying insects whilst instilling a sense of well-being into human visitors who choose to spend time there.

Another plot will be managed as “Meadow” This has already been planted with a native Meadow Seed Mix of native grasses and broad leaved plants. We intend to mow this with a Brushcutter each August. The action of this should be “scythelike” causing little harm to any insect larvae etc. attached to the grass. After drying out, the “Hay” will be piled up close to the hedge where it will become haven to vertebrates and invertebrates alike.

We will try to maintain a very short, even bare, earth patch for some species of mining bee that need that habitat. The pond will sit in the midst of all this - as it does now - and we will continue to add native plants to the pond and the pond edge as these become available.

The remainder will be a “Tussock” type of habitat. That is mostly long grass, not cut at all on any regular basis. This type of habitat has the potential to be the most biologically diverse next to the pond. providing homes for Voles, Shrews, Mice, Large Ground Beetles and many more. These otherwise would not thrive on the patch. This tussock habitat will comprise several patches of ground joined up by narrower corridors to connect the whole into one larger habitat.

As now footpaths will remain cut into the sward to enable visitors free passage from habitat to habitat. All will converge at the pond.

We need to place bits of wood, bark, stone etc. lying around for insects, Woodlice, Centipedes, Amphibians etc. to hide under.

We look forward to seeing you there in 2021.

On behalf of the Team may I take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mary, Mark, Pauline and Dave





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Flood Watch

Wet, wet, wet describes October's weather with storm Alex at the beginning of the month and storm Aiden in the closing days of October into the start of November. Although October is normally the wettest month in a year this year has been exceptional with nearly double the normal average, even exceeding the February high. Strong winds from Atlantic lows resulted in unsettled weather patterns with local wind speeds of 30 mph whilst areas of the UK experienced 70 mph, heavy rainfall and flooding. The remainder of November will see daytime temperatures around 10 degrees centigrade with a small risk of overnight frost. With daylight hours continuing to fall, currently at 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours, changing at 2 minutes per day this will continue until 21st December, the official start of winter when daylight hours will start to increase. As winter is characterised by periods of stormy weather the next UK named storms will be Bella, then Christoph, alternating names being male then female.

The anticipated blue moon at Halloween was obscured by night clouds although the moon rise in the east formed an impressive sight as the Nene Valley was flooded with bright moonlight, circa 5.30 pm.

With saturated ground conditions the river levels respond rapidly to new rainfall and more rapid run-off. This is a reminder to assess your own potential flood risk both from the river, brook or flash flooding and poor surface water drainage. In my own case the Easter 98 floods initiated an assessment of my own property risk resulting in a three tier system of protection. Tier 1 resulted in the creation of a relatively water tight enclosure across the full width of the property by removing gateways in a low level wall to create a single entry/exit point which is permanently protected by a flood barrier permanently fitted. This comprised a timber structure with glued joints using copper pipe lagging to form a compressible seal. In the event of leakage a submersible pump can be employed to remove unwanted water. As the garden has tiered levels a second wall can be similarly protected should the need arise. In the unlikely event that flood water reached the house the vulnerable entry points above dpc level, such as door openings or patio doors can be similarly protected. In the latter case the flood guards can use polythene sheet applied across the opening before installing the guard. A guard was produced for each opening and the wall predrilled and plugged in readiness for a rapid response should the need ever arise. To protect brickwork and provide a waterproof seal the area of walling 18 inches above ground level was treated with a clear silicon sealant.

Since 1998 only tier 1 and the use of the pump on one occasion has needed to be employed, maintaining leakage levels below 1 inch! These precautions may seem excessive but with increasing risk from climate change I feel well prepared.

J. Arnold.



NEW to the tennis club in November – WALKING TENNIS

We intend to start this the first Monday that we are allowed to do so

This is a slowed down version of the traditional game. Who is it for? - anyone!
No membership or tennis skills required.

Benefits –

Playing walking tennis can bring real benefits, aside from the physical health gains, players benefit from the boost of being outdoors with the mental health benefits of exercise, interaction with others, and a sense of achievement of developing new skills.

Starting ASAP Mondays 10.30 -11.30 am at Nether Heyford Tennis Courts.
Equipment will be provided and there will be no charge.

For further information and to book a space please contact
Jo - 01327 349094, 07749 822016 or jodickson@btinternet.com
Or find us on Facebook

Bugbrooke and District Flower Society

Like all groups we have missed meeting with friends and our monthly 'fix' of beautiful flower demonstrations as well as various outings and events during the year. It is difficult to comprehend that we last met in February. The committee have held two zoom meetings, which was a new experience for some, with the intention of being ready should the situation improve; alas this has not been the case.

A few months ago, one of our members, an ex-National Demonstrator, gave us a wonderful evening by providing a demonstration via zoom – with over 70 of us watching all over the area it gave us a real boost.

As it seems likely we will be unable to hold our Christmas Workshop, which we always enjoy, we are looking at the possibility of holding a step-by-step lesson on zoom.

We very much look forward to the day we can welcome everyone back to enjoy friendship through flowers. Until then we send Seasons Greetings to all for the Christmas period and a healthy and peaceful year ahead.

For more information please follow us on Facebook or contact Dianne on 01604 830063 or Simone on 01327 342167.

Quiz - The theme is parts of the body

Answers at bottom of page

1	A garden flower	
2	Seen on a farm	
3	Soldiers marching	
4	Funny bone	
5	Those in favour	
6	Those not in favour	
7	Found in hedgerows	
8	A blue stocking	
9	A measurement	
10	A fishmonger has these	
11	A strong container	
12	Somewhat conceited	
13	A comb has them	
14	Used with a hammer	
15	University men	
16	Collected weekly	
17	Learner driver	
18	Punctuation mark	
19	Important main road	
20	No longer legal tender	
21	Used by an artist	
22	A cad / dishonourable person	

1. Iris 2. Calf 3. Instep 4. Humerus 5. Eyes (Ayes) 6. Nose (Noes)
7. Hip 8. Eyebrow (highbrow) 9. Foot 10. Muscles (Mussels) 11. Chest
12. Vein (Vain) 13. Teeth 14. Nails 15. Tendons (Ten Dons) 16. Waist (Waste)
17. Pupil 18. Colon 19. Trunk 20. Crown 21. Palate (Palette) 22. Heel

Bob's memories

Lower Heyford known now as Nether Heyford is a village steeped in history. When I first moved here in October 1964 the village was quite different to what it is today.

We moved into 75 Furnace Lane, a chalet bungalow, opposite was the dairy field with a big house owned by the sisters Green. There were 2 big houses as you came down the road from the A5 on the right hand side, and a bungalow owned by Pinky Lilley on the left. From the bungalow, the field reached down to the council houses.

On our side of the road we were next to the big houses. Our houses had just been built by Mr Howe, a former constable who came from Luton. I think that there were six chalet bungalows built in all. They led down to the council houses on the right of Furnace Lane.

Coming into the centre of the village was the Green which is I'm told is the largest green in the country. Surrounding the village green were thatched houses, the Baptist chapel, school, village hall and a few houses. Opposite Furnace Lane is Church Street where I now live.

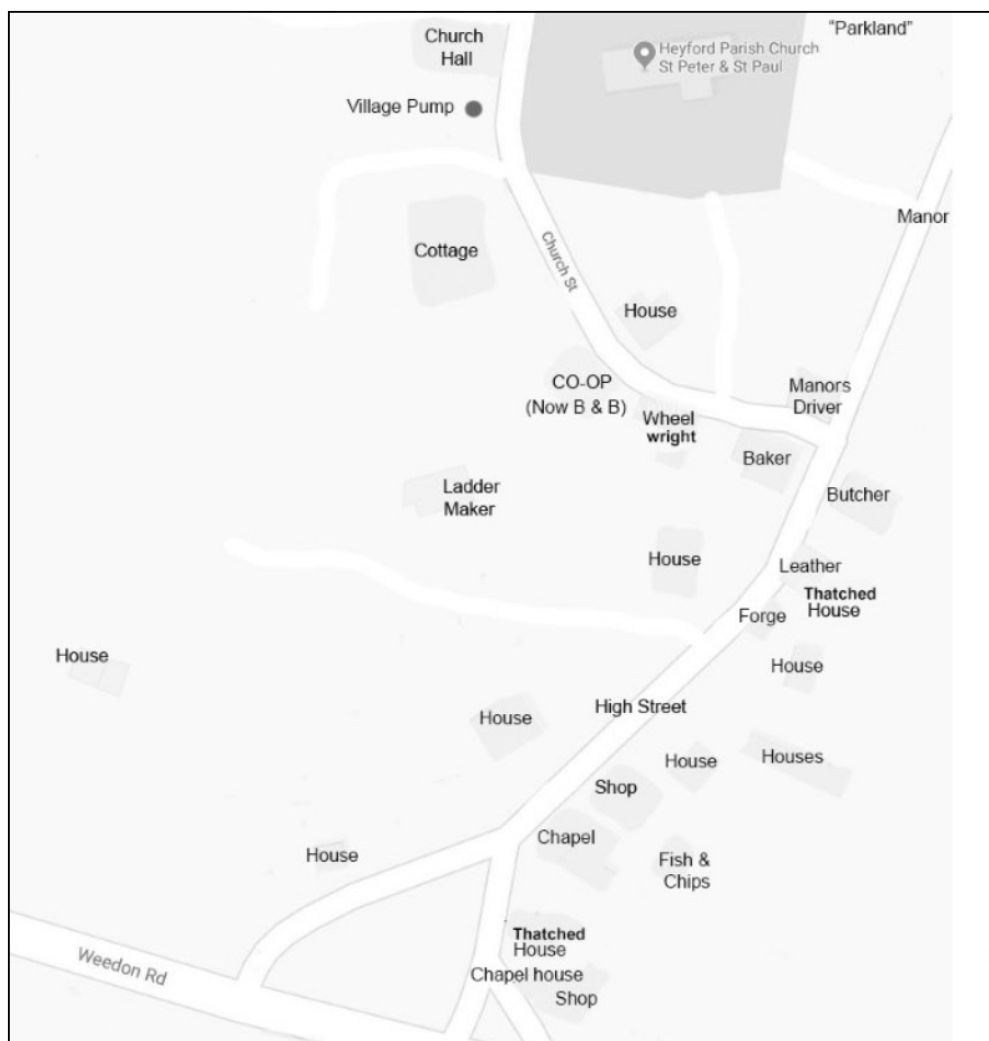
There was a shop on the corner which once was owned by Major and Mrs Blaney. Next to the shops was a house that used to be a chapel and when we moved into the village, an old thatched house was next to a bigger chapel that used to be run as a Youth Club. The shop next door was owned by Mrs Court but was run by Mrs Highfield and there was a small fish and chips place just between the chapel and the shop.

The 3 storey house next to the shop had a row of houses which are now no more and next to them was an old forge which was used later for a garage. The thatched house was beautiful and had a well with wrought iron covers just inside the entrance.

This is the true centre of Heyford.

On the road to the church, there was a bakery which used to cook the congregations Yorkshire puddings while they were in church, a wheelwright, the co-op and another small shop next to the jitty and also a ladder makers as well.

Bob Smith



John Butchers article in the November Prattler

The lady mentioned was known to us as Roma Far. In 1951, I was a 7-year-old who walked every day from Upper Heyford to Bliss School. We would stop and feed the goat and stroke the dogs. She camped in the field known as the Pykle next to Crow Lane, before the entrance to the lane was filled in by the council, it was a nice open space often used by gypsies.

Many years later having become an avid book collector, I discovered that Roma Far was really Rowena Farre, the best selling authoress of 'Seal Morning', a wild life book published in 1957. This was followed by 'A time from the World' published in 1962. This is the story of her roaming life, living with gypsies and tinkers, her stay in Upper Heyford was part of this journey.

David Banner

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Welcome packs are available for newcomers to our Village. The information in them helps people feel at home quickly.

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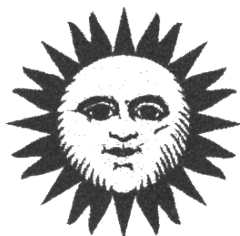
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Fried Chicken Box Meal	£7.00	Chicken Kebab	£7.00
Beef Bourguignon	£8.00	Venison & Chorizo Burger	£7.00

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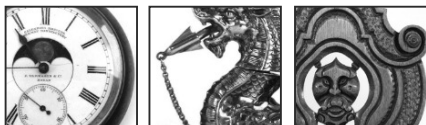
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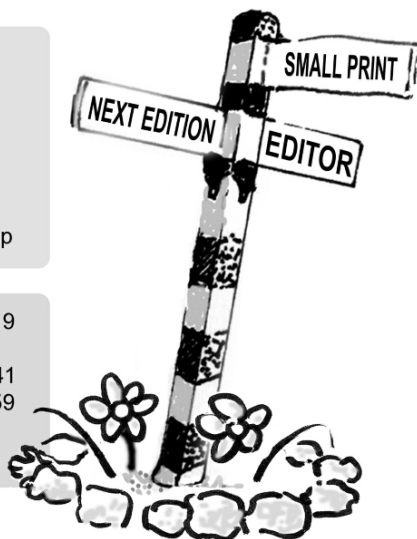
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